A CHRISTIAN NEWSLETTER ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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CHRISTIANS AND THE IRON CURTAIN

It will be recalled that the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches encouraged Christians to lift their sights over and beyond the Iron Curtains by which the world of nations is divided. The Evanston resolution said, in part:

"We appeal to the governments and the peoples to continue to speak to one another, to avoid rancor and malice, and to look for ways by which fear and suspicion may be removed. . . .

"We appeal to the representatives of the churches in those countries between which tension exists to visit one another, so that they may gain a better understanding of one another, and of the countries in which they live, and thus strengthen the bonds of fellowship, and promote the reconciliation of the nations."

According to the Ecumenical Press Service, a message from the World Council of Churches appealing "to the governments and the peoples" to help in the relief of present world tensions is en route to Patriarch Alexei, of Moscow, head of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Message quoted from the language of the Evanston resolution and concluded with an appeal to "all Christians to join in prayer that God will guide the governments and the peoples in the way of justice and peace."

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ATOMS-FOR-PEACE

The action of the Political and Security Committee of the UN in unanimously approving an atoms-for-peace program will evoke widespread interest among the churches of the United States and other lands. Responsible churchmen are of the opinion that a peace plan for the international pooling of nuclear power will be a first step, and a very significant step toward placing nuclear weapons under some form of international control.

The Soviet Union voted for the atoms-for-peace plan despite the fact that the Committee turned thumbs down on two amendments advanced by the Soviet delegate. The first of these amendments recommended that the proposed international atomic energy agency be made responsible to the Security Council. It was held by the United States, and other Western powers, that such an arrangement would give the Soviet Union a chance to use its veto to obstruct the ongoing work of the agency. The second amendment recommended that all states desiring to do so, instead of only those that are members of the UN, or its Specialized Agencies, be permitted to attend the projected world scientific conference. This amendment was defeated 36 to 6, with 18 abstentions. The reason was that under this amendment such Communist regimes as those in North Korea, East Germany, and China would be able to participate in the conference.

In its Resolution the UN Political and Security Committee affirmed its belief that "the benefits arising from the momentous discovery of atomic energy should be placed at the service of mankind." It expressed its desire "to promote energetically the use of atomic energy to the end that it will serve only the peaceful pursuits of mankind and ameliorate their living conditions." It recognized "the importance and the urgency of international cooperation in developing and expanding the peaceful uses of atomic energy to assist in lifting the burdens of hunger, poverty and disease," and that "all nations should cooperate in promoting the dissemination of knowledge in the realm of nuclear technology for peaceful ends."

The Resolution provides:

a) For the establishment as quickly as possible of an International Atomic Energy Agency to facilitate the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

b) That once the Agency is established, it negotiate an appropriate form of agreement with the United Nations.

c) That an international technical conference of governments should be held under the auspices of the United Nations to explore means of developing the peaceful uses of atomic energy through international cooperation and, in particular, to study the development of atomic power and to consider other technical areas - such as biology, medicine, radiation protection, and fundamental science - in which international cooperation might most effectively be accomplished.

d) That the scientific conference be convened not later than August, 1955, at a place to be determined by the Secretary General.

e) That the Secretary General of the UN circulate for information a report of this Conference to all members of the United Nations, and to other governments and specialized agencies participating in the conference.

ON THE FOREIGN POLICY FRONT

1. A Preventive War

American church bodies are on record as being unequivocally opposed to a preventive war. The position of the churches, in this respect, is official United States policy. Secretary of State Dulles, at a recent press conference had this to say: "Any idea of a preventive war is wholly out of the question as far as the United States is concerned. President Eisenhower has made his position in that respect unmistakably clear, that any such action would be abhorent to him. It is not in any sense part or parcel, even remotely, of U.S. foreign policy. I believe what I say in relation to the present Administration would equally be applicable to the past Administration . . . (It) is not and, as far as I can forecast, never will be any part of U.S. foreign policy."

2. Pacific Pact

President Eisenhower has sent to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty and its Protocol.

3. U.S.-Japan Relations

President Eisenhower and Japanese Premier Yoshida issued a communique on economic relations between the two countries. The communique said, in part: "General agreement was reached that the United States would cooperate with Japan in its effort to expand its foreign trade and achieve a better balance in its foreign economic relations. It was further agreed that the United States would sell to Japan agricultural commodities and that a substantial portion of the proceeds of these sales will be used for Japan's domestic economic improvement and defense support and for regional economic development . . . ."

4. International Exchange

The National Council of Churches has been a staunch supporter of programs of international exchange. During the recent session of Congress, when appropriations for the continuation of this program were threatened, the Department of International Justice and Goodwill, by authority of the General Board of the National Council sent to key government leaders including members of Congress a communication urging that adequate appropriations be voted.

A State Department publication states that the promotion of world peace through an international exchange of teen-age young men was discussed at a meeting this month between the attaches of 23 friendly powers and high ranking officers of the Civil Air Patrol, the Air Force, and the Department of State.

5. Big Four Conference

The Big Four Conference on the over-all problem of Europe, proposed by the USSR, is being discussed not only in the world press but in the councils of government.

Prime Minister Churchill said the British Government policy would be to await the coming into effect of the Paris treaties and after that to "look forward to a further development of understanding with the Soviet Government."

Pierre Mendes-France, in a speech before the UN General Assembly, November 22, suggested that a Big Four Conference be held in May, 1955, by which time it was hoped the Paris agreements on West German rearmament and sovereignty would be in force. The French Premier said he would be "quite happy to see the creation of an Eastern European defense association, so long as it adopts the modalities provided for by the West (in the Paris accords) for the publication, limitation and control of armaments."

According to press dispatches from Washington the United States has given qualified support to the proposal of Mendes-France that a Big Four Conference be convened next May. It has been the position of the U.S. that a Big Four meeting should under no circumstances, be convened prior to the ratification of the Paris agreements and then only until sufficient time has elapsed to allow for careful planning. It is the further view of President Eisenhower that any meeting with the Soviet Union ought to be held at the Foreign Ministers' level before any attempt is made to bring together the heads of state.

RATIFICATION OF PARIS ACCORDS GETS UNDER WAY

The churches have a genuine interest in current developments related to the Paris agreements to which brief reference was made in the September-October Newsletter. Ever since the early days of the Marshall Plan when the churches supported economic aid to the stricken peoples of Europe the American churches have supported the idea of European integration. The Paris agreements if and when ratified by all of the signatories, will take Western Europe a long way toward the United Europe for which statesmen have struggled for centuries.

It will be recalled that the three Paris agreements provided for the following:

a) Germany is to be restored to equal status with the other Western Powers.

b) Germany and Italy will become members of the Western European Union under conditions which provide for controls on the armed forces and armament production of each member.

c) Germany is to become a member of NATO and will make its armed force contribution to Western European defense through that organization.

The United Kingdom became the first nation to approve the Paris accords arming Germany and paving the way for Germany's entrance into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The vote was 264 to 4. The four labor votes were cast by members of the Labor Party. In the main, the Laborites abstained.

The Adenauer Cabinet, following a vigorous debate, approved the Paris Treaties for submission to the Bonn legislature.

It is expected that the French National Assembly will act on the accords before the end of the year.

These agreements have been laid before the Senate of the United States by President Eisenhower who expressed the hope that they would be ratified early in 1955.

METHODISTS CAMPAIGN FOR WORLD ORDER

The District Superintendents of the Methodist Church - 600 strong - met in Chicago, November 22, to launch the Methodist Crusade for World Order. This Crusade is designed to stimulate study and action respecting such issues as the spiritual bases of world justice and peace; the United Nations, including the question of Charter review; and Disarmament, including the atoms-for-peace proposal currently before the UN.

Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam presented to the District Superintendents the basic educational document to be used during the Crusade. This 96-page booklet bears the title Plowshares and Pruning Hooks. Chapter titles and authors are: "The Meaning of Peace," by Ralph W. Sockman; "The United Nations: Toward Better Understanding and Firmer Support," by O. Frederick Nolde; and "Disarmament," by Walter W. Van Kirk. The booklet is illustrated by Lynd Ward. With a paper cover it is priced at 50 cents per copy, postpaid, and orders may be sent to Central Promotional Office, 740 Rush Street, Chicago 11, Illinois.

Two of the above mentioned authors were heard at the Chicago meeting. The following quotes are from these two addresses:

O. Frederick Nolde, "The United States Government has affirmed and reaffirmed its support of the United Nations. I am confident that this stand reflects the preponderant desire of our people. However, the real test of the support which the United States thus proclaims will be found in its position and on the issues which recurringly arise and on which international action is needed.

"Frequently the opponents of the United Nations do not speak out in categorical denunciation but seek rather to weaken the Organization by advocating that on specific issues the United States should refuse to cooperate or should be half hearted in its participation . . .

"Much is being said today about 'coexistence' as the only alternative to a third world war. The term itself has become controversial and into it are read all kinds of meanings. The Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches avoided its use because of its unhappy historical significance and some of its current political implications. Nevertheless, there are fortunately very few people who contend that we must give up the effort to live together in a divided world and have recourse to wars for the settlement of our disputes. Clear thinking and balanced judgment are urgently in demand in order that we may mark out the pathway to be followed."

Walter W. Van Kirk, "While the churches must confess with shame their inability thus far to stop the race in arms they need not, for this reason accept, without protest, a situation wrought with the gravest peril to our civilization. While the churches must concede that in a world of madness such as ours national weakness invites disaster, they need not, for this reason, relax their efforts to achieve an international order in which armies, and navies, and air forces are reduced to the level of a police force to be used under the authority and in the name of the world community. That is why, in the Crusade launched by the Methodist Church, there is included, among other aims, release from the bondage of competitive armaments. Let the churches everywhere say to all men that God's way is not the way of war and of preparations for war; that God created the earth not as a proving ground for lethal weapons of mass destruction, but as a place of creative habitation for His children. Of far greater weight in the scales of history than fission and fussion, are faith and fidelity; faith in God whose righteousness is for the healing of the nations, and fidelity to Christ who bade us sheathe our swords lest we be destroyed."

United Nations Charter Review, by Ernest A. Gross. SOCIAL ACTION, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y., December 1954, 25¢ a copy. Mr. Gross sets forth some of the basic problems underlying the question: "Should the United States support a Charter Review Conference?" and indicates some of the processes which would be involved. It is his contention that in a conference to review the Charter, the United States' own interests and objectives will also come under "review." Two commentaries follow Mr. Gross's analysis: William R. Frye, UN correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor, argues that the values accruing from a full public discussion in the UN of proposals for Charter revision would outweigh all the hazards; Norman Cousins believes that the question whether to review or not to review is now academic and that the U.S. should prepare itself for the conference.

CHRISTIANS AND SURPLUS FOODS

Church World Service tells us that reserves of agricultural products in the United States have reached startling proportions. As of April 21, 1954, the Commodity Credit Corporation reported surplus stocks as follows:

Commodity	Quantity
Butter	358,745,000 lb.
Cheese	381,925,000 lb.
Dried Milk	458,813,000 lb.
Corn	413,370,000 bu.
Wheat	414,482,000 bu.
Cottonseed Oil (refined)	869,020,000 lb.

If these surplus foods were loaded in 50-ton railway cars in a single train running through the United States the engine would be in Europe and the caboose in China. Says CWS: "It would require 7,000 shiploads of 200 carloads each to move these reserves, stocks owned by Commodity Credit Corporation under loan, which are now close to $7 billion in value. Storage charges exceed $500,000 daily."

It is a matter of gratification that the U.S. Government is offering a part of its agricultural reserves to American voluntary agencies for distribution among needy persons overseas. Under the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, agricultural surplus commodities, aggregating $700,000,000 in value, may be sold abroad for local currencies over a period of three years, and such commodities, up to $300,000,000 in value, may be given to friendly peoples in the event of national disaster or famine. Cost of moving millions of dollars worth of these reserves to ports of entry will be shared by our government, but costs of administration and of final distribution overseas, the handling and the supervision, must be paid by the voluntary agencies, including the churches. Could church funds be used for a nobler purpose?

CHURCHMEN VIEW EUROPEAN SITUATION

The Committee on the Christian Responsibility for European Cooperation, meeting in Brussels following the defeat of EDC and before the new agreements pertaining to the proposed Western European Union had been arrived at, spoke its mind on the question of German rearmament. This Committee, made up of Christian lay leaders of Western Europe, does not officially represent their respective churches. Their views are believed, however, to reflect a considerable section of lay opinion. The following quote from its statement "Europe After the Defeat of E.D.C." will be of interest to the readers of this Newsletter.

"All of us Europeans know that the rearmament of Germany arouses strong feelings both inside and outside Germany. It is, of course, a serious matter for the nations concerned to reverse the position concerning German rearmament which they took immediately after the war. But it is clear today that this rearmament cannot be prevented. The reasons are the following: all the governments concerned decided in 1950, that the Federal Republic of Germany should be rearmed since they were convinced that the defense of Europe in the face of a tremendous Soviet Army would not be possible without German troops and the use of German territory. Moreover, it is neither advisable nor possible to discriminate against Germany and to withhold from it the rights of a state. Nor is it possible to keep a large country disarmed in a world in which every nation is armed.

"At the same time American public opinion assumes that the Germans should share in the responsibility for the defense of Europe and are unwilling to maintain troops in Europe if the European nations themselves, including Germany, do not contribute their share. Such are the fundamental data of the present situation and no policy which claims to be realistic can neglect them. The attempt to neglect them contributed to the rejection of the European Defense Community. Thus the only way left open is the formation of a national German army under guarantees which have been set forth for all at the London conference.

"The desire for negotiations with the Soviet Union before implementing the policies of European unity, is understandable but ill-founded and has threatened to paralyse European action. Every opportunity for negotiation with the Soviet Union should be followed up, but this is not an alternative to European unity. So far the Soviet Union has not been prepared to agree with the Western World regarding a German peace treaty and the position of the Soviet occupied countries in Eastern Europe. The example of Austria is conspicuously striking. There is not the slightest indication that the Soviet Union is prepared to withdraw from these territories and to give the peoples concerned the opportunity to determine freely their own affairs and their own political status.

"In the light of past experience it is inconceivable that any result can be obtained in this field as long as the Western powers are disunited and can be played against each other. It follows that the longer the West passively waits for Russian concessions the less likely is the chance that the conditions of successful negotiation will be fulfilled. It would be a mistake to slacken the pace of European unity in order to placate the Soviet Union. It is clear that only established facts of political and economic health and strength will impress the rulers of the Communist world and make possible successful negotiations."

US CONTRIBUTIONS TO UN AND ITS SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The question is frequently raised as to the contributions of the United States to the UN and its various agencies. Also, what is the share of these contributions per person in the United States. Here are the latest available figures for the fiscal year 1955:

Purpose		Cost Per Person in U.S.
United Nations Regular Budget	$13,407,290	.08
United Nations Special Programs:		
Technical Assistance (assuming the 8 million dollars Congress has authorized is appropriated)	$17,957,621	
United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency	$19,000,000	
United Nations Children's Fund (this year's part of 18-mo. approp.)	$ 8,334,000	
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in Near East	$23,063,250	
Subtotal	$68,354,872	.42
United States' Contributions to Specialized Agencies (Appropriations are made directly to each agency by Congress)		
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	$3,153,500	
World Health Organization	$2,987,667	
Food and Agriculture Organization	$1,650,435	
International Labor Organization	$1,527,477	
International Civil Aviation Organization (includes regular approp. and voluntary contributions)	$1,383,268	
International Telecommunication Union	$ 136,200	
World Meteorological Organization	36,253	
Universal Postal Union	19,500	
Subtotal	$10,894,300	.06
GRAND TOTAL	$92,656,461	.56

UMT AND THE METHODISTS

The Council of Bishops, of the Methodist Church, meeting in Chicago, November 20, called upon members of that communion to oppose any attempt to enact legislation providing for universal military training. Said the Council of Bishops: "The Church is concerned with our survival as a democracy penetrated by Christian values. Militarism as a way of life is a foe of democracy and our forefathers fled to these shores to escape it." The Bishops took note of the fact that Nazi Germany had not been saved by a system of universal military training. "Their very domination by the military way of life," it was said "evoked a false sense of security and a disregard for spiritual values."